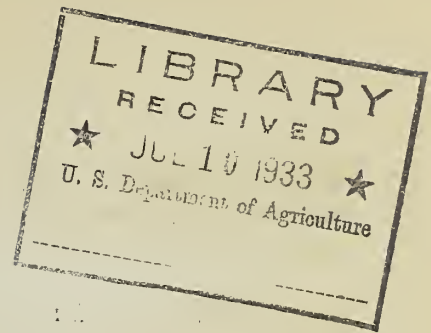


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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

More About Cooking Eggs

An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman and Mrs. Fanny Walker Yeatman, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC Stations, Tuesday, May 9, 1933.

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MISS VAN DEMAN: How do you do, Everybody:

One Tuesday in April you remember, Mrs. Yeatman and I talked about the scientific principles behind cooking eggs. We referred so many times to moderate temperature that maybe you thought it was our theme song. Well, as a matter of fact it is. If you want to cook the protein of egg properly you have to keep the heat moderate. This applies whether you're poaching, or frying, or baking eggs, or using them in a mixture like an omelet or a souffle.

That day we didn't have time to talk about omelets and other egg dishes. So I made a date with Mrs. Yeatman to come back and continue the story. She's here today, over at the other microphone, so we'll go right ahead.

Mrs. Yeatman, just exactly how do you apply this principle of moderate temperature in cooking an omelet.

MRS. YEATMAN: Well, if I'm making a fluffy omelet of course I separate the yolks and white of the eggs and beat them separately. Then I mix either milk or thick white sauce with the yolks and add salt to season. The white sauce makes a larger omelet and one with more body than you can get with milk as the liquid, but of course, it's a little more bother to make. Next, I fold this egg yolk mixture gradually into the stiffly beaten whites. You'll notice I did not say fold the whites into the yolks. If you try to fold the whites into the yolks you'll break up more of the tiny cells which inclose air and make the whites light and fluffy.

While I'm mixing the omelet, I have a smooth thick pan on the stove gradually heating, and in it about a tablespoon of butter. When I poor the egg mixture in, the pan is well heated, but by no means sizzling hot.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Then I suppose you keep the heat fairly low.

MRS. YEATMAN: Yes, as soon as the omelet browns slightly on the bottom, I do one of three things. I lower the heat and let the omelet cook through very slowly and then slip it under a broiler flame for just a minute or two at the very last to brown on top. Or I put a lid on the pan to hold in the steam and make it help cook the omelet. Or if convenient I finish cooking the omelet in the oven.

MISS VAN DEMAN: A moderate oven, of course.

MRS. YEATMAN: Yes, I bake it in a moderate oven for about 10 minutes to finish.
(over)

MISS VAN DEMAN: Mrs. Yeatman, do you think a flat omelet, the kind we call a French omelet with the yolks and whites all beaten up together, is easier to cook than a fluffy omelet?

MRS. YEATMAN: Yes, and easier to over-cook. And when it is over-cooked, it hasn't the tender delicate quality of the perfect omelet.

Now, may I give just a suggestion or two about seasoning omelets. There are three ways of adding the seasoning. You can chop up parsley and green spring onions or celery and add them right to the egg and milk mixture before you cook it. Or just before you turn the omelet out of the pan, you can spread jelly or grated cheese or chopped ham over the top and then fold the omelet over. Or another good way is to pour melted butter seasoned with chopped parsley or chives over the omelet after you turn it out on the hot platter. Or use creole sauce this same way, or any other savory sauce that contrasts well in color and flavor with the omelet.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Now, for the souffles. So many people are timid about making souffles. But here again it's just a question of slow baking in a very moderate oven.

MRS. YEATMAN: Yes, that's all. Or at least, it's the main thing. To make a souffle you also need a good binder like a thick white sauce or bread crumbs to hold the eggs and other ingredients together. And again let me emphasize folding the mixture into the stiffly beaten whites.

A souffle needs to bake a fairly long time in an oven at about 300° F. Then the protein in the egg has a chance to set. Then these tiny cell walls become firm then the souffle stays light.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, that's what keeps a souffle from falling. I've noticed that if a souffle bakes quickly in a hot oven, it collapses the minute it comes out. It simply doesn't have a chance to cook through.

Mrs. Yeatman, isn't this often the trouble with sponge cakes also?

MRS. YEATMAN: It is in my experience. Both sponge cakes and angel cakes have so much egg in them that they're baked on this same principle. I keep the temperature at 325° F. during the whole time a sponge cake or an angel cake is in the oven.

MISS VAN DEMAN: When you bake meringues or fruit whips you keep the oven temperature even lower than that, don't you?

MRS. YEATMAN: Yes, meringues and whips are chiefly egg whites. I bake them in a very slow oven. I have the oven for a fruit whip only about 225° to 250° F. and I set the dish in a pan of water to keep the cooking slow and even.

For a meringue on top of a pie, we've found that an oven at about 325° F. is just right. And the meringue needs to bake about 15 to 20 minutes. Then it stays up after the pie cools and is just delicately browned here and there.

I know that custards are a whole story in themselves but just let me give you this one point. When I'm baking a custard, I use individual custard cups if pos-

sible. They make both cooking and serving easy. I always set them in a pan of water and then keep the oven at about 350° F. Keep an eye on custards while they are baking. As soon as they are set, take them out of the oven, and out of the water, and let them cool quickly. An earthenware dish holds the heat, and as we've said again and again egg mixtures are easy to over-cook.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, thank you, Mrs. Yeatman. I can see that we need still another Household Calendar on the cook of eggs in custards.

But next week we open the canning season. Miss Stienbarger will be with me to talk about equipment for home canning fruits and vegetables.

Goodbye for this time.

